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March 14, 2000

Federal Caucus Comment Record
c/o BPA-PL
707-W. Main Street, Suite 500
Spokane, WA 99205

Dear Sirs:

Montana Water Resources Association (MWRA) is opposed to breaching Snake River dams. Negative regional impacts and costs to working people and their families, power consumers and agricultural industry would be enormous.

Analysis used to project economic value of a free-flowing river scenario is indefinite at best. In addition, study summaries show that fisheries benefits are uncertain and based on a number of assumptions, indicating a lack of sufficient credible scientific data. Any effort to breach Snake River dams would be simply placating a free-flowing river environmental agenda. Fisheries enhancement goals may be accomplished through far less extreme measures such as improved fish passage and barging results, addressing ocean predation and other survival factors and research providing substantiated scientific information.

Finally, MWRA believes that a decision/action of the magnitude and consequences associated with the breaching of such dams should be subject to extensive Congressional scrutiny and authorization.

Sincerely,

Michael E. Murphy
Executive Director

cc: Senator Conrad Burns
Senator Max Baucus
Representative Rick Hill
Governor Marc Racicot
Bud Clinch, DNRC Director